



November 30, 2005

Dear Colleagues:

RE: Fee for Records Use

As you know, the Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology (DHPA) has become a central repository for archaeological site records in Indiana, housing tens of thousands of archaeological site forms, cultural resource management and grant reports, maps with site locations, and other records. In addition, the DHPA has a centralized and computerized archaeological site database. Thousands of additional records and reports are received and archived each year.

Qualified professionals regularly consult and use the DHPA archaeological database and records. Currently, two days a week are set aside for researchers to visit the office, and appointments must be scheduled due to the demand. Depending upon the size and type of project, a records check usually involves many hours of staff preparation. There is a strong and increased demand for use of records and records checks time. Providing, maintaining, organizing, and preparing this information for records checks consumes a substantial amount of staff time, especially with the high volume of projects, and increasingly shorter time frames for review of and response to projects. Many states have been forced to charge fees for records checks and data management, particularly in times of financial stress. State historic preservation offices charge subscription fees, staff search charges, report and site processing fees, records search fees, etc. Fees vary, but range as high as \$200 per hour.

In response to the large amounts of requests for information from the archaeological records maintained at the Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, and fiscal constraints, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) now finds it necessary to assess a fee for records checks to cover staff time and costs. The Natural Resources Commission has supported, approved, and mandated the initiation of fees. Fees have been initiated or raised for many DNR services, in order to continue providing services, to become more self-sufficient and effective, and to reduce general costs to the taxpayer.

A user fee of \$35 per each half-hour will be instituted effective January 1, 2006. All for-profit users will be assessed this fee. However, there will be no charges assessed for qualified public and regulatory agency staff with statutorily-mandated historic preservation duties, or for non-profit grant and research projects for qualified students and researchers from not-for-profit research institutions and universities. Payment for the fee will be expected at the time of the records check visit, and our administrative staff can answer questions regarding payment.

The fees are limited to recouping the costs and services of records checks and the use and maintenance of the records. Fees will allow quicker organization, maintenance, and access of site information, and allow the office to keep up with the increasing number of forms and information which are submitted to our office.

We hope that you understand the need for these changes and will continue to be supportive of the Indiana State Historic Preservation Office and programs and services. If you have any questions about this matter, please contact Indiana State Archaeologist, Dr. Rick Jones, at (317) 232-1646.

Very truly yours,

Kyle J. Hupfer
Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer